

On September 14, 2012, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and House colleagues sent a letter to Secretary Hillary Clinton in support of the Global Partnership for Education, the only multilateral initiative dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to a quality education.

Dear Secretary Clinton:

Knowing of your strong commitment to promoting education for all children, particularly girls, around the world, we are writing to urge you to commit to contributing \$125 million to the Global Partnership for Education in fiscal year 2013.

Despite significant gains over the past several decades, there are still 61 million primary school aged children not in school. The majority of these out-of-school children – about 35 million – are girls. Although access to education has improved, the international community continues to struggle to ensure that, once enrolled, students stay in school, and that pupils receive a quality education that gives them basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills. Despite some progress, in the lowest-income countries about fifty percent of children cannot read anything at all at the end of grade 2.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is the only multilateral initiative dedicated to addressing those challenges and ensuring that all children have access to a quality education. With an agenda focused on fragile and conflict-affected states, girls' education, and learning outcomes, the GPE is addressing the most challenging components of global education. By working directly with developing country governments and their partners to develop and fund national education plans, the GPE fosters country ownership and encourages domestic financing for basic education.

In November of last year, the Global Partnership for Education launched a three-year replenishment campaign to mobilize \$2.5 billion for the GPE Fund to deliver on the goals of enrolling an additional 25 million children into classrooms for the first time, training 600,000 new teachers, and reducing illiteracy for primary school aged children.

At the Global Partnership for Education's funding replenishment conference in November of last year, the United States made its first ever pledge of \$20 million. That was a significant step forward for the United States, which, despite holding a seat on the Board of Directors, had never provided funding to the GPE Fund. We applaud this initial pledge and urge you to build on this contribution in 2013.

Leadership from the United States is critical to ensuring that the GPE receives the funding it needs. In difficult economic times, coordinating aid with other countries provides a cost-effective way to deliver aid to education without having to expand bilateral aid. It reduces overhead, relying on donor agencies with the lowest unit cost and the greatest comparative advantage to deliver its support in each country — ensuring that donor aid has the most impact.

Education is foundational to the health and development of children, communities, and countries as well as your efforts to advance global health and food security. A child born to an educated mother is more than twice as likely to survive to the age of five, and studies have shown that increased education can lead to increased crop yields and decreased rates of malnutrition. Societies without access to education are more likely to be unstable, and a lack of opportunity breeds insecurity and violence. Promoting basic education is not just a humanitarian imperative; it is in our national security interest.

Our current contribution, while important, represents just 2.5 percent of our total investment in international basic education. Increased U.S. support for the Global Partnership for Education in 2013 will help to leverage additional donor funds and move the global community closer to ensuring a quality education for all children. We urge you to contribute \$125 million to the GPE in 2013.

Thank you for your outstanding commitment to providing primary education around the world, and your exemplary leadership in promoting the basic rights of all girls. We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that all children can access quality basic education.